DIRECTIONS
ABOUT
PREPARING
FOR
DEATH.

Eccles. 11. 8.

If a man live many yeers, and rejoyce in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many: All that cometh is vanity.

LONDON,
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To the much Honoured, Sir *John Langham*, Knight and Baronet.

Honoured Sir.

THIS now about six yeers since, that, at your Desire, and for your own private use, I penned the following short, and plain Directions; your apprehensions of your approching change being the occasion. For though, God hath been pleased to exempt you from very many of the usual Concomitants of old Age (so that you have not known, nor do to this day, what they mean, by your own experience;) yet the very Number of your Years, and the weakness you find creeping on you, (though, through Gods mercy, joyned with

a good measure of Health) *cannot but mind you of your long Home,* (*Ecc.* 12. 5.) *and give you to understand that there is but a little of your Glass to run. And as I was, by your desire, put upon the Writing of the ensuing little piece, so am I now, upon the Printing of it. And if it may prove more publickly useful, than I first design'd, I shall have cause to acknowledg the Divine Goodness therein, and to bless God for it. Now the Lord graciously help you in your preparations for your Eternal State;* (*which you do well to be much thinking of;*) *grant unto you,* that you may find mercy in that day: (2 Tim. 1. 18.) *multiply his Favours Spiritual and Temporal upon your posterity, and make them all great blessings, in their several stations: That being happy Instruments of Gods Glory*

in this World, they may be Vessels of Glory in that which is to come. This is the unfained and daily Prayer of

Sir your very much obliged
Servant in the Lord.

T. B.

Directions about Preparing for Death.

THERE is but one, and the ſame Direction for living Well, and dying Comfortably. And therefore the Holy Scripture, which was given to inſtruct us, How *to order our converſations aright*, (*Pſal.* 50. 23.) hath in teaching us that Leſſon, ſufficiently withal taught us the other too. A good Life cannot but have a bleſſed Concluſion. *The end of the upright man* (ſure enough) *ſhall be peace* (*Pſal.* 37. 37.) And doubtleſs, that man's

Hope is likely to prove no better than a *Spider's web*, (*Job.* 18.14.) who expects *to reap mercy from God* at his latter end, and yet, in the days of his health, makes no proviſion, *by ſowing in righteouſneſs* for ſuch an Harveſt. (*Hoſ.* 10. 12. *Iſa.* 32. 17.) Our Souls are not to be Bequeathed to God as a Legacy, at Death, but Soul and Body, and all we have, ought to be devoted to him, and his ſervice, in our Life-time, and throughout the whole courſe of our lives from firſt to laſt, (*Ecc.* 12. 1. *Apoc.* 2. 10.) Yet, I dare not abſolutely affirm, that a Death-bed Repentance is invalid: but this is ſure; He that deferrs his Repentance till then, will be hard put to it, even to ſatisfie himſelf, about his own ſincerity, if his Conſcience be awake. That which a man gives not

not till he be neceſſitated, is no proof of his Liberality. And, if to put off our turning to God, and reſignation of our ſelves to him, till we be arreſted by Death, be a ſign of our Love, 'tis hard to tell, what Argument there can be of a mind Alienated from Him. Yet I ſhould be far from diſcouraging any man (as I ſaid) from entertaining thoughts *of turning from his evil ways*, as if there were no hope for him; for who *can tell but God may ſhew mercy?* (*Jonah* 3. 8, 9.) However this is certain: *To get our Hearts mortified to the World, to ſue out our pardon through the Blood of Chriſt, to Believe and Repent, to Reform our ways, to be Holy, Righteous and Sober, to work out our Salvation with fear and trembling, to make our Calling and Election ſure*, are not only

works for Dying men, but they are every mans Duty, even *to day* while it is called to day (*Heb.* 3. 13, 15.) The Living, the Healthy, the Strong, the Young, as well as the Aged are to learn these Lessons, while their parts are vigorous, while their understanding, memory, senses, are best able to perform their several Offices, & Functions. These are things concern all, (so, as nothing more) as well, when they are apt fondly to imagine that Enemie Death a great way off, as when they have cause to think, they hear the sound of his Feet at the Door.

How sadly then do those persons delude and abuse themselves (and God knows there be multitudes of such) who have a strong fancy, that they may, all the while they live, balk the way of Gods precepts (those *paths of pleasantness* to the *spiritually-minded*,

minded, but rugged and tedious to ſuch *as are carnal*, (*Pro.* 3.17. *Rom.* 8.7.) and yet find *a ſhort cut* to Heaven when they dye? And in the ſtrength of this Fancy do adventure to run perfectly counter to the direction of our Bleſſed Saviour (*Mat.* 6.33) ſeeking to make ſure of other things firſt, and moſt preſumptuouſly promiſing themſelves, that the Kingdom of Heaven ſhall be added to them at laſt? This, I know, they do in love to their fleſh, and that they may *make proviſions for it*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 13.14.) but it is a moſt dreadful thing, that a man, in favour to his fleſh, ſhould be thus cruel to his own Soul, *hardning himſelf againſt it as if it were none of his* (as we read *Job.* 39.14-18. the Oſtrich ſerves her young ones) being ſo, wholly unconcerned

cerned about his own Eternal Welfare and Woe.

But to let these men pass: As for such as are spiritually-wise, they will not be tempted to run such hazzards; They will be careful, with all speed, to do those things, which others when they come to dye, shall wish they had done. Not but that the Best of men have their failings, which they are sensible of, and see cause to be deeply humbled for (*Psal.* 19. 12.) notwithstanding their greatest care to work out their Salvation, that they may have nothing to do, when Death comes, but to Dye. And therefore, though, when their last hour is at hand, they have no new work (for the main) to go about, but only that to go over again, which every Christian is, or should have been, accustomed

to,

to, long before; yet they know it concerns them to beſtir themſelves (with the wiſe Virgins, *Mat.* 25.7.) *In trimming their Lamps*, and that ſo much the more, becauſe *Night is approaching* (*Joh.* 9. 4.) Though therefore they have oft ſearched their Hearts and inquired into their ſpiritual eſtate, they now do it again, they review their lives, they examine how matters ſtand between God and their ſouls; they conſider what account they ſhall give of their Stewardſhip, they look over their Evidences for Heaven, and ſtir up themſelvs to exerciſe their Faith, and renew their Repentance; they labour, by Meditation, to get a proſpect of the promiſed Land, that having their Hearts diſ-intangled from the Creature, they may bid adieu to this vain World, and

their

their ſouls may, chearfully and with comfort, take their flight to thoſe *Bleſſed Manſions above*. That this is the right way of preparing for death, I am now to ſhew ſomewhat more particularly. But firſt, it will be needful, for me, to ſpeak of the cauſes of that (I ſhould call it ſtupendious, if it were not common) unpreparedneſs, and unwillingneſs, that is in the moſt, as to their death and departure hence, when as yet they know well enough, it is unavoidable. Now the cauſes hereof are principally, and chiefly three, *viz.*

1. Their inordinate and unreaſonable Love of this preſent World, and the enjoyments of it, from which they are loth to let go their Hold.

2. Conſcience of ſin, and the ſad Apprehenſions they have of

of the Guilt, under which they lye.

3. And Consequently, the great uncertainty they are in, of what will become of them in the next World. For if our affections were weaned (as they should be) from things below; had we some good assurance, our sins were pardoned, and that we should be happy in the world to come; there would be so little of terrour in death, that we should be willing and ready, at a days, at an hours-warning, to lay down our *earthly House of this Tabernacle, in hope of an house made without hands, eternal in the Heavens,* (2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2.) and hardly any more afraid to dye, than we usually are to compose our selves to sleep, when night is come.

That we may therefore be in a continual preparedness for our last

laſt hour, and able to welcome Death cheerfully, when ever it ſhall ſummon us to be gone hence; Three things are to be done.

1. We muſt, out of hand, labour with our hearts to make them dead to all things ſublunary; our profits, honours, pleaſures, even all our earthly comforts.

2. We muſt, with all ſpeed, and importunity, ſue out our pardon, at the Throne of Grace, through the Blood of Chriſt.

3. We muſt daily be giving all diligence to make our Election more and more ſure, and to work out our Salvation. And thus doing, whether the *Maſter of the Houſe come at even, or at Midnight, or at Cock-crowing, or in the Morning,* (as 'tis *Mark* 13. 35.) we ſhall be in a readineſs for

for him, and received by him *into his joy*, (*Mat.* 25. 21.)

1. To begin with the first: It is not possible, we should ever be ready, and willing, when God calls us hence, to leave the world, if we have not first learned *to use it, as if we used it not* (1 *Cor.* 7. 31.) For if our hearts be set upon these present things, and we engaged in an over-eager pursuit, and prosecution of them, it will be as death to us, before we dye, to think of parting with them, and bidding them an everlasting Adieu. And yet alas, this is the Temper of all the Sons of *Adam*; the profits and pleasures, and accommodations of this Life, whether they enjoy (in hopes, or possession) little or much of them, seem very great things in their eyes and esteem: And 'tis natural to them

to

to prize and value them above measure. *The Love of the World, and of the things in the World,* is so prevalent with the most, that, if it were put to their choyce, they would be for living here, always, and not care for any better, or any other Heaven. To have their Inheritance, on this side of *Jordan,* would please them best, if it might be granted to them, *here to abide, and here to have a continuing City.* (*Heb.* 13. 14.) Till a mans heart therefore be otherwise affected, the thoughts of removing hence must needs be bitter, and unpleasing, and let any one judg, how such a person is likely to be prepared for his *Great change.*

Now to loosen our affections from the Creature, two things are requisite:

1. Se-

1. Serious and Deep Meditation.

2. Fervent and Frequent Prayer.

Two things are to be chafed into our hearts, by often Meditating on them.

1. How *empty and vain*, all theſe inferiour things are.

2. How much *better things* by far, and more worthy our affections, there are to be enjoyed.

1. For the *Vanity* of all things under the Sun, it cannot be better ſet forth, than by thoſe Arguments, which *Solomon* (who was inſpired by the Holy-Ghoſt to write on this Subject) uſeth in the firſt Chap. of *Eccleſ.* I ſhall mention only four of them.

1. *What profit* (ſaith he, *Eccl.* 1, 3.) *hath a man of all his labour,*

bour, which he taketh under the Sun? Which is as if he had ſaid, He hath none at all, or that which next to none. When a man with his buſtling and taking pains, and diſtracting cares, by day and by night, hath run out his precious time, waſted his ſtrength, worn out his body, and tired himſelf; Let him but ſit down (a while) and caſt up his accounts, (to ſee what he hath purchaſed) and he will find, that *Solomon* hath adjuſted them right to his hand, in the Text laſt cited, and that (upon the whole) *He hath no profit*, that is, none comparatively, none worth ſpeaking of. For,

Suppoſe a man hath gotten, *by his labour under the Sun*, as much as any ever did: Yet,

1. Firſt, When all's done, In many reſpects, he is ſtill but upon

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the *same terms* with those of his Neighbours, that have not (haply) the Hundredth or the Thousandth part of what he enjoys. He is still as subject to diseases, weaknesses, and pains; he lyes as open (for all his Honour or Estate) to the Calamities of Mankind, to the loss of his most intimate Friends, of his dearest Children, and most belov'd Relations, and may, every whit as soon, be crossed and afflicted in them, as the meanest person. He can no more *ransom from going to the Grave*, (*Psal.* 49.7.) yea or procure a reprieve, for any he most tenderly loves, than the poorest Man. Honour, and Riches, are no fence at all to the Owners of them, or to their Families from the Feaver, the small Pox, the Gout, the Stone, or from the Pestilence it self, and in-

innumerable Evils more. A man, by all *the Labour he takes under the Sun*, hath in ſuch caſes as theſe, (and many beſide, that might be nam'd) no priviledg, more than thoſe of a lower condition; nor is he raiſed, one jot, above the Level of them, whom he uſeth to look upon as his Underlings. Thus far, therefore, *A man hath no profit of all the Labour he takes under the Sun.*

2. But then again further: He that hath the greateſt ſhare of theſe earthly things, doth, in many regards, ſtand, upon *worſe terms* than thoſe do, who enjoy much leſs of them. He is oft perplexed with thoſe *Cares, Anxieties, Vexations, Diſcontentments, and Fears*, that others, in a lower ſtation, are not acquainted with; And is expoſed to thoſe *Inconveniences and Dangers*

gers (who can number them all?) from which his inferiors are ſecur'd. *The ſleep of the labouring man is ſweet, but the abundance of the rich will not ſuffer him to ſleep in quiet.* (*Eccl.* 5. 12.) Beſide, the larger portion of theſe outward things any one enjoys, the more ſtill he is envy'd. And who, that obſervs any thing of the affairs of the World, is not able from his own experience, to produce inſtances good ſtore, of the trueth of that which *Solomon* ſaith (*Pro.* 27. 4.) that *None can ſtand before envy.* The higheſt Cedars (as 'tis well known) are moſt ſubject to be ſtricken with Thunder, and moſt expos'd to winds and tempeſts, which the lower ſhrubs are not ſo moleſted with; And yet, all this while, I have not mention'd (that which is worſe) *thoſe many ſorrows,* that

that ſuch perſons (as I now ſpeak of) are wont *to pierce themſelvs through with*, and *thoſe temptations and ſnares, and many fooliſh and hurtful luſts* (which they are more liable *to fall into*) and *which drown men in deſtruction, and perdition*, (1 *Tim.* 6. 9, 10.) if the infinite mercy of God prevent them not. So true an Obſervation is that of the wiſe man *Eccl.* 5. 13.) that *riches are often kept for the owners of them to their hurt.* And in this reſpect alſo, we may well repeat the former queſtion, *What profit hath a Man of all his Labour which he taketh under the Sun?*

3. And yet Thirdly, Thoſe things wherein ſuch (as have attained the moſt of what this World affords) are privileg'd above other, are but few. (*A Child may count them*, Iſa. 10, 19.)

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and ſo ſmall, if duely conſider-ed, that they conſiſt more in Fancy than Reality. *The Rich mans wealth* (ſaith *Solomon Pro.* 18. 11.) *is a ſtrong City, and an high Wall* (but withal he adds that 'tis ſo) *in his own Conceit.* And this appears, by what he tells us (*Ecc.* 5.11.) *When goods are increaſed, they are increaſed that eat them; and what good is there to the owners thereof, ſaving the beholding of them with their eyes?* This is (it ſeems) one chief advantage of a man, in the midſt of his Abundance: And how much is there in it, more than Fancy? Beſide, *The rich* (as we are told, *Pro.* 4. 20.) *have many friends*; and that's another of their priviledges. But it is to be underſtood, of ſuch as pretend and make a ſhew to be ſo. For *a friend* (indeed) *loveth at all*

 times

times (*Pro.* 17. 17.) And how few there be, that uſe to ſtick to ſuch perſons, when they are no longer, in a capacity *to give gifts*, (*Pro.* 19. 6.) daily experience makes ſo evident, that it needs no further proof. Their *Honour and Reſpect* is another thing, wherein they have the prehemi-nence above their Neighbours; but who knows not that to be a thing, rather in the *perſon honouring, than the perſon honoured?* And if there be not ſome inward real worth, that is the foundation of it, who but a fool can be pleas'd and taken with it? 'Tis true, if a man improve his Wealth and Reſpect, and Accomodations, to make him ſo much the more ſerviceable to God (as indeed they are not otherwiſe of any value) he may by his well-uſing of theſe things, *lay up a good foun-*

foundation of comfort to his ſoul (1 *Tim.* 6. 19.) againſt the time to come, and provide for his happineſs in another World. But that muſt be (as 'tis in the Text laſt cited) by his being *rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate*, and that from a principle of Faith, and Love, and with ſincere reſpect to Gods Glory. It muſt be, by outſtripping others, as much in doing good, as he goes beyond them in Eſtate and Authority, by doing as much ſervice to God, as an hundred others, when he hath an hundred times as much as they; otherwiſe his Reckonings will be but the more heavy, when he ſhall be required to give *an Account of his Stewardſhip.* (*Luk.* 16. 2. *Mat.* 25. 19-23.) So far ſhall he be from being, ever a whit, in the better caſe for

all his enjoyments! ſo that, let a man have never *ſo great an inheritance*, unleſs God give him *wiſdom* alſo (*Ecc.* 7. 11.) to trade for things *Eternal*, with *Temporal*, we may ſtill ask as *Solomon*, doth *What profit hath he?*

2. Another Argument, the wiſeman makes uſe of, to demonſtrate *the Emptineſs* of the things under the Sun (the point in hand) is taken from *Mans Mortality.* (*Ecc.* 1. 4.) *One Generation goes, and another comes, but the Earth endures.* Suppoſe a man, by his Labour, had got any Accommodations, which could, more or leſs, contribute to his profit; yet this is the miſery, he cannot enjoy them long. If they *make not themſelves wings, and flee away*, as very often they do (*Pro.* 23. 5.) before their owners be aware; 'tis certain, he muſt *ſhortly*

ly flee away, from them, *as a ſhadow*, (ſo we read *Job.*14.2.) *here he muſt not continue.* The Earth, indeed, abides and hath done almoſt theſe 6000. years; but one Generation treads upon the heels of another; and we ſee by the experience of all times, one thruſteth another off the Stage. Once within an hundred years, there's a perfect riddance made of all the Inhabitants of the Earth, and others come in their room: God dealing with the Earth, as one doth with *a diſh*, *that he wipeth and turneth upſide down*, emptying it of what was in it before, (according to that expreſſion 2 *King.* 21.13.) The whole World is but a great, and common Inn, where every hour ſome are newly entring, and others are going out, and no body ſtays very long. Every day, thouſands are crowd-

ing into the World, and thouſands of paſſing Bells are daily tolling, to give notice that others are haſting out as faſt. How fain would a man live to ſee this Child, and that Child, diſpoſed of, and ſetled, and then would fain ſtay a little longer to ſee his Childrens Children, and yet a little longer to ſee his Poſterity planted, and taking root and ſpreading abroad: And how apt is he to pleaſe himſelf with ſuch thoughts as theſe, till Death come upon him like an armed man, as poverty and want ſeize upon the ſluggard while he is yawning out, *Yet a little ſleep, a little ſlumber?* (*Pro.* 6. 10.) For here no man muſt be permitted to linger long, or take up his Reſt; we muſt all pack up, and be gone. *Who is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee Death? Who can deliver his ſoul*

ſoul from the hand of the Grave? (*Pſal.* 89. 48.) No perſon, of what Quality or Condition ſoever, hath in this particular any prerogative more than the pooreſt Beggar. Thoſe who, for their eminency above others, are ſometimes, in Scripture, *called gods*, (even the higheſt of them) muſt for all that, *dye like other men*, (*Pſal.* 82. 6, 7.) The Clay-Cottages of ſome few, indeed, may be a little more tight, and ſo laſt a little longer than other mens do: but there is a period fixt for all (known only to God) beyond which they cannot paſs; and when that hour is come, God ſaith but the word and it is done, *Return to your duſt ye Children of men*, (*Pſal.* 90. 3.) To ſtruggle, or hang back is to no purpoſe. Now what an exceeding great Vanity is this! For,

1. Ere a man can come to reap the fruit (he desires) of what he hath sowed and spent his study and labour about, Death is upon him, and he must be gone. And though he would give all his Estate for a few yeers reprieve, though he would never so fain be respited, for a little while longer, till he might see such or such a business dispatcht, it will not be granted. How often falls it out, that a man brings some Project (which he was long in travel with) to that forwardness, that there wants but little more than the laying of the Top-stone, and yet Death forceth him to leave his work imperfect? How frequently is it seen that, when a man is now going to tast the sweet of some Accommodation (that he hath been some yeers labouring for, and hath gotten

gotten at length) Death comes on a ſudden, and daſheth the cup out of his hand, before it touches his lips? How uſually doth it happen, that when a man begins to ſing, *Soul, take thine eaſe, thou haſt much goods laid up*, he is preſently diſturbed by hearing a voice ſaying, *Thou fool this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee?* (Luk. 12. 19, 20.)

Secondly. All theſe things which he hath toiled and laboured for, he muſt leave behind him; and the word of God tells him *He knows not for whom*, Pſal. 39. 6. He hopes indeed they ſhall be for ſuch as he himſelf hath deſign'd, but daily *Experience*, as well as the *Scripture*, ſhews that's a thing no man hath any certainty of. To be ſure, *As he came naked into the world, ſo again naked he muſt return*, Job.

1. 21. *And when he dieth he ſhall carry nothing away, his glory and his riches ſhall not deſcend after him*, Pſal. 49. 17. All things in the world being in this reſpect like thoſe ſtanders, that a man muſt leave behind him, when he removes from one houſe to another. And this the wiſe man takes notice of *as a ſore evil, that a man ſhall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand; but in all points, as he came, ſo ſhall he go*; and from hence inferrs, *What profit hath he that thus laboured for the wind?* Eccleſ. 5. 15, 16. Now if the caſe be thus, can the things of this world be fit Objects for an Immortal Soul to doat upon? Or, is there any likelihood they ſhould contribute to the Satisfaction of ſo noble a Being, any more than Vanity it ſelf, would be able to do?

Thirdly.

Thirdly. Solomon's next Argument to prove the point we are ſpeaking of, ſeems to be taken from the very *Conſtitution* and *frame* of this world, and its ſeveral parts: *The Sun riſeth and goeth down, and haſteth to the place where he aroſe. The Wind goeth to the South, and turneth about to the North; it whirleth about continually. All Rivers run into the Sea; unto the place whence the Rivers come, thither do they return again. All things are full of labour,* (*Eccleſ.* 1. 5, 6, 7, 8.) that is; The World and all the parts of it are ſo conſtituted and framed, that they do proclaim to *every one that hath ears to hear, Ariſe, begone, this is not your reſting place,* (Mic. 2. 10.) Let any man that *hath eyes to ſee,* but look about him, and ſuppoſe he were askt the queſtion, that was put to

Jeremy,

Jeremy, (chap. 1. 11, 13.) *What seest thou?* What could he answer, but I see the Sun, the Wind, the Sea, and all Creatures in a perpetual hurry & agitation; nothing keeps the same face for a day together, without some alteration. And what of this? Why, doth this look like the place, where Happiness is to be found? Do not all Creatures, with one voice, proclaim aloud, that *All is vanity*? and that we must seek somewhere else, for that felicity we pant and gasp after? Certainly there are no such Vicissitudes and Changes, there is no such unquietness in the place appointed for Man's eternal Rest. If we were but *considerative*, and would but *shew our selves men* (as the Holy Ghost speaks, *Esa.* 46. 8.) we might easily gather and collect from hence, that here below is no-

nothing but Vanity, and that Creatures and Creature-comforts were never ordained by God, for those ends, that men in their folly think to make them serve for. Give but a suit of Apparel to an *Indian* that goes naked, and is not acquainted with such clothes as we wear, and let him but consider the frame and make of them, and he will easily guess by comparing the several parts of it, with the parts of his body, which was, and which was not, made for each. And if we did but seriously compare what's to be had in this World and our Souls together, might we not as easily find it out, that things here below were never made for them; and that their only use is, to give us a little Accommodations for our Bodies, and that but for a while? Might we not soon discern, that

here

here is not any thing to be had, which will do the ſoul good, or conduce to its welfare? and therefore that, as to ſuch a purpoſe, *All things are Vanity.*

A fourth Argument, by which the Preacher demonſtrates how empty all things under the Sun are, is the little, or rather the no-ſatisfaction that they do All afford. *The eye* (ſaith he, *chap.* 1 8.) *is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear with hearing.* And he argues thus from the leſs, If *the eye and the ear* cannot be ſatisfied with things ſeen and heard, betwixt which yet there is ſome proportion; much leſs can the Mind and Soul of Man be filled with any thing ſublunary, betwixt which there is no proportion at all. Now the Eye though it have ſeen never ſo much, would fain ſee more. & the ear would learn and diſcover

ſome-

ſomething further, and is ſtill liſtning after ſome new thing. The moſt pleaſing Objects (in a little while) grow ſtale, and we are weary of them. A man may look upon that he delights in till his eye-ſtrings crack, e're he have his fill, break his neck (as one ſaith) ſooner than his faſt on earthly contentments. Men quickly grow to a loathing of what they have moſt importunately longed for, and have no ſooner got what they did eagerly deſire, but would preſently fain have ſomething elſe. We promiſe our ſelves great matters while we are in expectation of ſuch and ſuch things; but we find not that in the fruition which we looked for. The contentment we have in the things of this World is from the Fancy we have of what is in them, while we

beheld

behold them at a diſtance, but the nearer we come to them the leſs we ſee in them to be taken with. *He that feedeth on them feedeth on aſhes, and he hath no better than a lie in his right hand,* (*Eſa.* 44.20.) Now thus it would not be, if they were not meer emptineſs and vanity. Where happineſs is, there is full and compleat ſatisfaction without any nauſeating. There the deſires of the ſoul are all rectifi'd, and no one of them meets with diſappointment. But this World is not the place where, nor the Accomdations of this World, the things wherein felicity is to be found. As to that purpoſe, *All's but Vanity.*

Theſe things, and ſuch as theſe we muſt often and ſeriouſly meditate on, that we may learn (to uſe the Apoſtles expreſſion, *Rom.* 12.3.)

12. 3.) *not to think* of the Profits and Honour, and Pleasures of this life, *more highly than we ought to think*, and then they will be no hindrance to us in our Preparation for death.

2. But secondly we must also (as I said) by Meditation labour to get our hearts affected with those Things within the Vail. Those infinitely better things that are to be enjoyed in the other World; yea, and in this life too, as to the first-fruits and Earnests of them. Such are those Graces that *make us rich towards God*, (Luk. 12. 21.) those Honours that are confer'd by Him, in *making us his friends, & adopting us for his Sons, and co-heirs with Christ*, (Joh. 15. 14. Jam. 2. 23. Rom. 8. 17.) Those pleasures which consist in *Communion and Fellowship with Him, and with his Son*

Son the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Joh. 1. 3.) Of such things as those, the soul is capable; & in them consists its Life and Peace, and Comfort here, and Happiness hereafter. The Apostle speaking of Meats, (1 *Cor.* 6. 13.) saith, *The belly is for them, and they for the belly & both must perish.* But these are things fitted for the Immortal Soul of Man, and for which the Soul was made, and both endure unto Eternity. They fill the heart with *joy unspeakable and glorious*, (1 Pet. 1. 18.) a joy that's lasting and will hold; whereas that which ariseth from worldly Contentments, is but like the blaze of a little brush-wood, that is soon extinguished, (*Eccles.* 7. 6.) The serious apprehensions of these things will make us *as weaned* children, (*Psal.* 131. 2.) toward things below, and work in us a longing

longing *desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ*, (Phil. 1. 23.) that we may have the full enjoyment of what we now hope for. So as we shall be ready to say with *Austin*'s Mother, when she had heard a discourse of the Glory above, *What do I here then?* and with *Simeon*, to welcome death and say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.* The strong and restless inclinations of our Souls in seeking happiness, do certainly shew that there is to be found, some where that which will satisfie it; if this world yield it not, sure enough the other doth. The Childs eyes and ears, and the other Organs of his Sences are framed we know) even when it is in the Mothers womb; and yet, while it is there, it finds not Objects for them. But yet this very thing, that

that God hath given it those Organs, is proof sufficient that he hath prepared Objects somewhere else. And when the Child comes into the world he meets with them.

Thus it is in the present case: we may be sure God would not have put that unceſſant, earneſt, and unwearied longing after Happineſs, into our Souls, if he had not alſo provided that which might fully ſatisfie us; and therefore we may be certain, though in this life we find it not, (Riches and Honours, and Pleaſures, have it not in them) yet in another world there is that to be had, which here we do ſo reſtleſly pant and gaſp after. If our affections were taken with theſe things, Death (which is but the Saints paſſage to the fulneſs of theſe joys) would not be dreadful to

us,

us, nor ſhould we be unprepared for it.

2. As we muſt Meditate much and often upon theſe eternal things; ſo we muſt be earneſt, and importunate in *Prayer*, with God, to take off our Hearts, from the creature, and to draw them forth to Himſelf. "Lord, "thou haſt made the creatures "for me, and my uſe, but haſt "not made me for them. Thou "haſt given me a noble and im-"mortal Soul, that is capable of "communion with thine own "Majeſty. Thou haſt made my "Heart for thy Bleſſed Self, and "I find it is reſtleſs, and for ever "will be ſo, till I come *to enjoy* "*Thee*, (*Pſal.* 73. 22.) Ah! how "*fooliſhly* have I miſpent the "greateſt part of my days, in "*digging broken Ciſterns, that* "*can hold no water*, (*Jer.* 2. 13.)

"while,

" while, in the *mean ſeaſon, I have*
" *forſaken thee who art the foun-*
" *tain of living water*! How have
" I *wearyed* my ſelf *in following*
" *after the Wind*! (*Hoſ.* 12. 1.)
" How hath my head and heart
" been filled and perplexed with
" cares, and thoughts, about e-
" very thing almoſt, ſave that
" *one thing neceſſary*! (*Luk.* 10. 42.)
" I have been ſolicitous about my
" eſtate, about my honour, about
" my Accommodations here, a-
" bout providing, that I and
" mine, might live in *repute and*
" *eaſe*; but Ah! How hath my
" *Soul* and the concernments of it
" (mean while) been neglected
" by me! And now, Lord, what
" doth all this advantage me!
" How true is that which thou
" haſt told me in thy word, *that*
" *a man hath no profit of all that*
" *wherein he hath labourd under*

the

"*the Sun?* (*Ecc.* 1. 3.) Death is "at hand, the *Judg ſtands* before "the door, I ſhall be called, I "know not how ſoon to give an "*Account* of my ſtewardſhip; *I* "*muſt ſhortly go hence and return* "*to my houſe no more, nor ſhall my* "*place know me any more* (*Job.* 7. "10.) *And as I brought nothing* "*into the world with me, ſo muſt* "*I carry nothing away of all I have* "(1 *Tim.* 6. 7.) and if I could, "what would it avail me, or do "me good? Lord, I ſee my errors, "and my folly, though it be late; "and I humbly bleſs thee, that I "do ſo, and hope it is not yet too "late. Through thy favour, I "have enjoyed abundance of "thoſe outward mercies, others "have wanted; and while thou- "ſands have been put to great "exigencies and ſtraits, (that "have deſerved as well) *My cup*

hath

"*hath overflowed, thou haſt a-*
"*noynted my head with oyle, and*
"*ſpread my Table in the preſence*
"*of mine enimies.* (*Pſal.* 23.5.)
"But heavenly Father, I truſt
"thou haſt other and better bleſ-
"ſings in ſtore for me, than theſe,
"and that thou wilt not put me
"off with *theſe for my portion.*
"(*Pſal.* 17. 14.) It is thy favour
"and love, (*Pſal.* 106. 4.) *that*
"*favour thou bear eſt to thy choſen*
"ones, that muſt make me *happy.*
"I am not, I cannot be ſatisfied
"with any thing elſe. Oh! be
"pleaſed to beſtow thy Self upon
"me. Give me, more and more
"to ſee, and to be convinced,
"that the riches, and honours,
"and accommodations of this
"preſent life, are no further at
"all valuable than as opportuni-
"ties of doing thee more ſervice
"than others can do who want
"them;

'them; and that otherwiſe they
'are meer vanities, and worſe,
'and will prove to be ſo at laſt.
'Give me, to remember they are
'*but Talents*, (*Mat.* 25. 27.)
'which thou haſt intruſted me
'with, not for my own uſe only,
'but to trade with, for thy ſer-
'vice and honour, who art my
'Lord and Maſter, and wilt call
'for (*v.* 19.) *an account of* them,
'*as certainly, and more ſtrictly*
'than ever I called my ſervants
'to account for any moneys of
'mine, that I committed into
'their hands. Lord, give me
'that wiſdom and faithfulneſs,
'that I may not be found wil-
'lingly and wittingly failing in
'my truſt. So convince me of
'the reality and truth of thoſe
'things *within the vail*, and ſo
'poſſeſs my heart with the ap-
'prehenſions of the *glory*, *and*

' *pleaſures, and full ſatisfaction* ' (*Pſal.* 16. 11.) *that is to be had* ' *in thy preſence, and at thy right* ' *hand*, that it may not be at all ' grievous to me, to part with ' theſe things below, which are ' tranſitory; and give me that ' evidence of my intereſt and ' part in *theſe Eternal things*, that ' I may willingly and cheerfully ' let go my hold of *things Tem-* ' *poral*, when thou ſhalt call me ' hence.

2. The ſecond thing that is to be done in order to our preparation for death, is, with all ſpeed and importunity to ſue out our Pardon at the *throne of Grace*. That which is (1 *Cor.* 15. 56.) the *ſting of Death* indeed, and makes it to be ſo terrible, *is ſin*. If ſin be pardoned, death is diſarmed, and cannot hurt us. But, where the Conſcience is loaded with guilt,

guilt, and the poor ſinner knows not but that all his Tranſgreſſions will be charged upon him, that all thoſe (*Mat.* 18. 24.) *many thouſand talents*, wherein he ſtands indebted to *Gods juſtice*, will be exacted (*Mat.* 5. 26.) *to the utmoſt farthing*; He can look upon Death, as no other than a *Scrjeant* ſent to *arreſt* him, body and ſoul, and to hale him to that priſon, from whence he muſt never be releaſed, till he hath payd all that he owes; and that will not be, unto *eternity*.

But what is to be done in this caſe?

This is firſt to be premiſed; that we have no way left us (by any thing we can give to God, any thing that we can do or ſuffer) to make ſatisfaction, in the leaſt, to Divine juſtice. If a man ſhould, (1 *Cor.* 13. 3.) *give*

all his goods to the poor; if he ſhould give a thouſand Rams, or ten thouſand rivers of Oyl: if he ſhould give the firſt-born of his Body, (*Mic.* 6, 6, 7.) or his own *body to be burnt* for the expiation of the *ſin of his* ſoul, it would not be accepted. There is no way to be freed from the guilt of ſin, but by Gods pardoning and forgiving it; and that pardon is not (as *Job* ſaith of wiſdom, *Job* 28. 16, 17, 18, 19.) *to be gotten for Gold, neither ſhall Silver be weighed for the price of it: it cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx, or the Saphire; the Gold, and the Cryſtal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it ſhall not be for jewels of Gold,* &c. The Blood of the Lord Jeſus *Chriſt, the Lamb of God* (*Joh.* 1. 29. 36. 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19.) far more precious than Silver and Gold is the only price of it; by that it was procured, by the ſhedding of that blood

blood full *ſatisfaction* hath been made to the juſtice of God; And therefore pardon of ſin, if we would obtain it, is to be ſued out at the Throne of Grace through the blood of that bleſſed Redeemer of ours.

The Scripture teacheth us how that is to be done. And the way, which we are there directed to take, is this, *viz.*

1. With ſorrow and ſhame humbly to confeſs wherein we have done amiſs.

2. Earneſtly, and, as for life, to plead Chriſts ſatisfaction, and to beg pardon for his ſake and upon his account.

Firſt, Confeſſion is to be made to God and that fully, without hiding any of our ſins, chiefly bewailing thoſe whereby we have moſt offended, and which lye heavieſt upon the conſcience,

with all the Aggravations of them. 'Ah Lord! what a grievous ſinner have I been, and 'how wofully have I gone aſtray 'from thee! what command of 'thine is it which I have not broken! How innumerable are my 'Omiſſions, my Commiſſions! '*Mine iniquities are gone over my 'head, and as an heavy burden 'they are too heavy for me to bear,* '(Pſ. 38. 4.) Whether I look upon 'my nature, or my life, I have cauſe 'exceedingly to be confounded. 'What ſin or wickedneſs is there 'which I have not the ſeeds of 'in me, and brought with me into the world; I was hewed out 'of the ſame rock, and digged 'out of the ſame pit, that *Cain* 'and *Judas* and all the reſt of the 'damned (even the worſt of 'them) were. That brutiſhneſs, 'and pride, and ſenſuality, that 'pro-

'prophaneſs and atheiſm, that 'contempt of thy Majeſty, and 'thine Ordinances, which do 'break forth and appear in the 'lives and ways of ſo many wret-'ches every where; all thoſe 'wickedneſſes which I have 'known, or heard committed by 'any of the Children of *Belial*: 'Of all theſe evils and abomina-'tions, I have the Principles in 'my curſed nature. Lord! Whoſe 'underſtanding is more blind, 'and vain and fooliſh than mine! 'whoſe Memory is more weak and 'feeble, more apt to forget Thee, 'my duty to Thee, my Lord and 'Saviour, the Things of my 'Peace; more apt to remember 'what I ſhould forget, injuries 'received, things evil or elſe im-'pertinent! How benummed is 'my Conſcience! How unſpeak-'ably perverſe and rebellious is

'my Will? and for my Affections,
'how unruly and disordered are
'they! continually either set upon
'things sinful, or sinning when
'they are carryed out after law-
'ful Objects! From this Original
'Corruption (which hath poy-
'soned my whole nature) thou
'Lord only, knowest how many
'millions of vain, foolish, carnal,
'unclean, uncharitable, impious,
'prophane, atheistical thoughts
'and imaginations, have daily
'and hourly issued, as sparks from
'a burning furnace; *So that every*
'*imagination of the thoughts of*
'*my heart hath been evil continu-*
'*ally*, (Gen. 6. 5.) *and that from*
'*my youth hitherto.* And, blessed
'Lord! I know not (but thou
'hast kept an account) how many
'idle, unsavoury, rash, besides
'wicked and ungodly words,
'have, upon any occasions, pro-
'ceeded

'ceeded out of my mouth, from
'that evil treaſure of my heart
'within me. Thoſe words are
'not wind (as many vainly per-
'ſwade themſelves) but ſuch, as
'our bleſſed Saviour tells us *muſt*
'*be reckoned for at the day of*
'*judgment*, (Matth. 12. 36.)
'if they be not in earneſt
'repented of. And, Lord, though
'here be more than enough and
'enough again to condemn me
'everlaſtingly; yet, bleſſed Fa-
'ther! I have not only thought
'and ſpoken ſo much amiſs, but I
'have alſo done that which is evil
'in thy ſight, thou knoweſt in
'how many places, how often,
'and with what Circumſtances;
'for thou telleſt all my ſteps, and
'obſerveſt all my wandrings,
'*When I ſin thou markeſt me, for*
'*thou knoweſt my down-ſitting and*
'*mine upriſing, thou compaſſeſt my*
'*path*

'*path*, (*Job.* 10. 14.) *and art acquainted with all my ways.* (*Psal.* 139. 2, 3.) Thou knoweſt how 'little I have minded what thou 'haſt given me in charge; how 'induſtrious and diligent I have 'been in my worldly affairs, how 'remiſs and cold about my ſpiri'tual concernments, how wiſe to 'lay up a treaſure for my ſelf on 'earth, and how careleſs in pro'viding for my precious and im'mortal Soul. Thou knoweſt 'how little delight I have had in 'thy Word and worſhip, how lit'tle zeal there hath been in me 'for thine Honour and Glory; 'how I have ſatisfied my ſelf oft'times in holy duties with the 'work done, not ſufficiently 'caring whether my communi'on with thee were improved by 'my approaching to thee. And 'when I have been about thoſe

'ſecular

'ſecular employments, which
'thou allowedſt me to be buſied
'in under the Sun, how little
'have I ſerved thee in them! Or
'hearkned to the directions thou
'haſt given in thy word for men
'to follow in their worldly la-
'bours! So that if my eſtate and
'wealth, and honour, and out-
'ward Accommodations ſhould
'*prove ſnares* unto my ſoul (as
'*they* do to thouſands, *Pſal.* 69.
'22.) and occaſions of my miſ-
'carrying unto all eternity, I muſt
'acknowledg thy juſtice, and
'blame none but my ſelf, who
'have refuſed to hearken to thy
'counſail, and would not be per-
'ſwaded there was any danger to
'be feared in ſuch things. And
'yet how often have I heard,
'and read in thy Word, that,
'*the cares of this World and the*
'*deceitfulneſs of Riches do choak*

'*the*

'*the Word, ſo that it becomes un-*
'*fruitful,* (*Mat.* 13. 22.) And
'thereupon, that *thoſe that are*
'*rich ſhall very hardly enter* into
'*the Kingdom of Heaven* (*Mat.*
'19. 23. 24.) How apt have I
'been *to truſt in uncertain riches,*
'*rather than in the living God,*
'(1 *Tim.* 6. 17) to make Silver
'and Gold my confidence, and
'to have my heart ſtollen away
'from thee? And for thoſe ta-
'lents thou haſt truſted me with,
'how ready have I been to for-
'get that I am but a ſteward,
'that nothing I have (1 *Cor.* 6.
'19. *Hoſ.* 2. 8, 9. *Hag.* 2. 10) *is*
'*mine own,* but *that all is thine,*
'and to be diſpoſed of as thou
'preſcribeſt. For, Lord! What
'have I, that I have not receiv-
'ed, and muſt not be accounta-
'ble for? Much thou haſt done for
'me, more than for thouſands,

'and

'and ten thouſands; but where
'hath been my thankfulneſs,
'mine obedience, my care to
'pleaſe thee ſo much the more
'for all the good thou haſt ſhew-
'ed me and done for me! Thou
'haſt reached out to me with a
'liberal hand. *My beginning was*
'*but ſmall* (*Job.* 8. 7.) and in-
'conſiderable, *but thou haſt*
'*greatly increaſed my latter end.*
'What outward Bleſſing, whe-
'ther of eſtate, or of repute, or
'of health, or of long life, or of
'a numerous and hopeful poſte-
'rity, do I want? What a num-
'ber of dangers, and *hazards*,
'(*Pſal.* 107. 23, 24, 25, 26.) and
'troubles by Sea and Land, by
'Night and Day haſt thou mer-
'cifully carryed me through?
'But ah! my unthankfulneſs, my
'forgetfulneſs of that God, who
'hath thus watched over me, and
'pre-

'preſerved me, and provided
'for me and mine, hitherto! And
'upon whoſe bounty and good-
'neſs I have lived all my days!
'Ah what poor returns have I
'made for all that I have receiv-
'ed. Are there not many of thy
'Saints, who, in want, and ſcarci-
'ty of what I enjoy, have done
'thee more faithful ſervice, lov-
'ed thee better, been more zeal-
'ous for thy Glory, yea more
'thankful, than I, in the abun-
'dance of all that I have enjoy-
'ed? Ah Lord! no words are
'ſufficient to ſet out my ſins and
'the hainouſneſs of them, which
'have been committed; ſome of
'them againſt Conſcience, and
'knowledg of my duty; ſome of
'them oft fallen into, and perſe-
'vered in long; ſome of them a-
'gainſt many renewed purpoſes
'and vows of better obedience:

'all

'all of them againſt many calls
'and invitations from thee to re-
'turn, and againſt many ſignal
'favours of thine vouchſaf'd to
'me unworthy. Bleſſed Father!
'Thou knoweſt my ſins better
'than I do, and they are all of
'them ſo many debts, which are
'recorded in thy book. Lord, I
'have nothing at all to pay of
'thoſe infinite ſummes which I
'owe unto thy dreadful juſtice;
'I have no way to make thee any
'amends or ſatisfaction. Lord, I
'do *here judg my ſelf* (1 *Cor.* 11.
'31.) worthy of what ever pun-
'iſhment, either in this life, or
'that which is to come, thy Word
'hath denounced againſt ſinners.
'I deſerve to lye everlaſtingly
'under thy curſe. If thou ſhould-
'eſt ſend me unto Hell, I muſt, *I*
'*will juſtifie thee* (*Pſal.* 51. 4.) in
'thy proceedings, and ſay, It is

'I

'I only that have undone my 'ſelf.

2. The next thing to be done in order to the ſuing out our pardon, is, to plead the Satisfaction and payment which Chriſt hath made to Divine juſtice for the ſins of ſo many as lay hold on him, and penitently ſeek pardon and favour from God through his blood. For, *He* (*Joh.* 1.29.) *is that Lamb of God which taketh away the ſins of the world, and his blood ſpeaketh better things than the blood of Abel doth* (*Heb.* 12. 24.) This is to take ſanctuary at the horns of that Altar, from which a believing and repenting ſinner ſhall not be pulled away. This is like the eſcaping to the City of refuge from the Avenger of blood: In a word, it is to fly from God, by flying to him; to fly from his juſtice by flying to his

his mercy. 'Lord! I have de-
'ſerved thy wrath, and it might
'be juſt with thee *to write bitter*
'*things againſt me*, (*Job.* 13.26.)
'for the ſins of my youth, and of
'my riper years. My ſins are ſo
'many, my guilt ſo black and
'horrid, that the Devil tempts
'me to deſpair, and my own
'heart is ready to miſgive me,
'and to tell me, there is no mercy
'for me, that I come now too
'late, and ſhall not be accepted.
'And if the mercy and grace that
'hath been ſo oft offered to me
'and ſlighted by me, ſhould now
'be denyed me: if now that I
'come to knock, thou ſhouldeſt
'bid me depart, and refuſe to
'take any notice of me, I muſt
'confeſs thou ſhouldeſt be righ-
'teous. Thou haſt called *on me*
'*and I have refuſed, thou haſt ma-*
'*ny a time ſtretched out thy hand*
'to

'*to me and I regarded thee not*;
'*how juſtly therefore might I call*
'*and not be heard, and ſeek thee*
'*with importunity and not find*
'*thee!* (*Prov.* 1. 24, 25, 28.)
'Lord, my Conſcience accuſeth
'me, my own heart condemns
'me and is ready to paſs ſentence
'againſt me. But, bleſſed Father!
'Is not thy grace free, and doeſt
'thou not uſe to beſtow it upon
'ſuch as are both undeſerving
'and illdeſerving too? Doth not
'the mercy and compaſſion of
'God as far exceed the mercy
'and compaſſion of the moſt ten-
'der-hearted among the Sons
'and Daughters of men, *as the*
'*Heaven is higher than the Earth?*
'(*Iſa.* 55. 9.) Haſt thou not de-
'clared that this is thy Name,
'(*Exod.* 34. 6, 7.) *The Lord, The*
'*Lord God merciful and gracious,*
'*long ſuffering, and abundant in*
'*good-*

'*goodneſs and truth, keeping mer-*
'*cy for thouſands, forgiving ini-*
'*quity, tranſgreſſion and ſin*; that
'is, ſins of all ſorts, ſins that one
'hath been habituated in, and
'accuſtomed unto? Yea and that
'I might have ſtrong *conſolation*
'*through hope*, (*Heb.* 6. 17, 18.)
'thou *haſt ſworn* that thou (*Ezek.*
'33. 11.) *delighteſt not in the*
'*death of a ſinner, but rather that*
'*he ſhould repent.* And haſt told
'me that *thou blotteſt out the*
'*tranſgreſſions* (*Iſa.* 43. 25.) of
'ſinners *freely for thy own ſake.* If
'none ſhould be received to
'mercy but thoſe that deſerved
'it, and were worthy of it; there
'would be cauſe indeed for me to
'wring my hands, and lye down
'in horrour and deſpair: But as
'long as thy grace is free, my un-
'worthineſs can be no hinder-
'ance to me from obtaining thy
'favour,

'favour, which thou art wont to
'ſhew only to unworthy ones for
'thy names ſake. And though,
'Holy and Glorious Lord! I am
'not able to make the leaſt ſatis-
'faction, or to pay one farthing
'of that dreadful ſumm, where-
'in I ſtand indebted to thy Juſt-
'ice; yet, I am ſure, there hath
'been a full and complete Satis-
'faction made to that infinite
'Juſtice of thine, and that by
'thine own and ever bleſſed Son,
'in behalf of as many poor ſin-
'ners, as, feeling their extreme
'need of ſuch a Saviour, plead his
'righteouſneſs, and beg mercy
'upon his Account. He was de-
'livered unto death, the cruel
'and curſed death of the Croſs
'*for our offences*, (*Rom.* 4. 25.)
'*and was raiſed again for our juſti-*
'*fication.* He *was bruiſed for our*
'*iniquities, and the chaſtiſement*
'*of*

'*of our peace was upon him, and*
'*by his ſtripes* (*Iſa.* 53.5.) poor
'ſinners are healed. And I read
'further in thy word of trueth,
'that the Lord Jeſus (*Heb.*7.25.)
'*is able to the uttermoſt to ſave all*
'*ſuch* (Ah! What a ſweet and
'comfortable word is that!) *All*
'*ſuch as come to God through him.*
'This is all I have to alledg and
'ſay for my ſelf, and this is e-
'nough, Lord: I deſire no more,
'to plead before the Tribunal of
'thy juſtice but only the ſatis-
'faction of thy Son. I hope he
'hath accounted for my ſins, my
'original ſin, my actual rebelli-
'ons, all thoſe evils that I have
'been guilty of, and lived ſo
'long in, and that therefore they
'ſhall not be charged upon me.
'The blood of Chriſt, I know,
'is ſufficient to cleanſe from all
'ſins, even *thoſe which are as*
'*Scarlet*,

'*Scarlet, and as Crimſon* (*Iſa.* 1.
'18.) Nor is it any preſumption
'for me, or any poor ſinner, upon
'thine encouragement) to hope
'for an intereſt and part in that
'redemption which that Bleſſed
'Son of thine hath wrought, for I
'have learned in thy word, that
'the ſalvation procured by him
'is a *common ſalvation* (*Jude v.* 3.)
'not limited and reſtrayned to a
'few only, but purchaſed for,
'and offered to *all that will*; and
'whoſoever will is bidden *to*
'*come, and take of the water of*
'*life freely* (*Rev.* 22. 17.) and
'*whoſoever is a thirſt to buy with-*
'*out money and without price* (*Iſa.*
'55. 1.) And though I am an
'hainous ſinner (as I muſt con-
'feſs;) yet Lord! Have not ma-
'ny grievous and horrid ſinners
'been received unto mercy? The
'Apoſtle ſpeaking of himſelf and
'other

'other believers that had found 'mercy, faith, (*Tit.* 3. 3.) *We 'our ſelves were ſometime fooliſh, 'diſobedient, ſerving divers luſts 'and pleaſures living in malice 'and envy, hateful and hating one 'another.* And the ſame Holy A-'poſtle tells the *Corinthians* that 'ſome of them who had formerly 'been *fornicatours, adulterers, 'theeves, drunkards, covetous, ex-'tortioners, and guilty of other foul 'and horrid ſins,* (1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10, 11.) were yet, through grace, '*waſhed, and juſtified,* and pardon-'ed, and ſanctified. What an infi-'nite number of poor ſinners, 'have been healed and cleanſed 'by the Blood of the Lord Jeſus 'Chriſt; And indeed, What caſe 'can be deſperate, when ſuch a 'Phyſician is pleaſed to under-'take the Cure? And though I 'come thus late, and even almoſt

'at

'at the eleventh hour, yet why
'ſhould I deſpair as long as I hear
'my dear Lord and Saviour cal-
'ling me, and ſaying unto me,
'Come: *Come thou that are weary*
'*and heavy laden*, (*Mat.* 11.28.)
'Return thou backſliding ſoul,
'and I will heal thee. I come,
'Lord, as well as my feeble
'ſtrength will permit; *Draw me*
'*and I will run after*, (*Cant.* 1.4.)
'I would fain believe (*Mar.* 9.
'24.) *help me againſt my unbe-*
'*lief.* Make me partaker of thy
'pardoning grace. Oh! *Happy*
'*are they whoſe iniquities are for-*
'*given, and whoſe ſins are covered!*
'(*Pſal.* 32. 1, 2.) *Bleſſed are they*
'*to whom God imputes not their*
'*ſin.* Bleſſed are they between
'whom and thy wrath, Chriſt in-
'terpoſeth himſelf as a skreen, to
'keep them from the heat of thy
'fiery indignation. And Oh! Let

'me

'me be ſo happy as to have a part
'in this priviledg; then will I
'ſing, (*Pſal.* 16.6.) *The lines are*
'*faln to me in a pleaſant place, and*
'*I have a goodly heritage for God*
'*is my portion.* What is long life,
'and honour, and a great Eſtate,
'or any thing, or all things that
'this world affords, if my ſins
'ſhould be charged upon me; and
'I be ſent to priſon, till I had paid
'every farthing of the debt I owe
'to thy juſtice? What good will
'all theſe things do me, if I be not
'juſtified, and pardoned, and re-
'ceived into thy favour through
'Chriſt? Oh, for Chriſt's ſake let
'me *be remembred with the mercy,*
'(*with this mercy*) *thou ſheweſt to*
'*thy choſen ones*; *Oh! Viſit me with*
'*thy ſalvation* (*Pſal.* 106.4.) Save
'me from my ſins, and by thy
'grace I will be thy ſervant, and
'own thee for my Lord; my Soul,

'and Body and Eſtate, and all I 'have ſhall be at thy command. 'Oh! Save me, and I ſhall glorifie 'thee, and ſing Hallelu-jah to 'thee with all thy Redeemed 'ones, to all Eternity.

3. The Third and laſt thing to be done in order to a preparation for our comfortable departure hence, is, daily to *give all diligence to make our election* ſure, (2 *Pet.* 1. 10.) that is, to labour to get ſome evidence, (which will not deceive us) that we are of the number of thoſe for whom that *inheritance in Heaven, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and never-fadeth away, is reſerved* (1 *Pet.* 1. 4.) How this may be done the Apoſtle tells us, *viz.* by *making our effectual calling ſure* (2 *Pet.* 1. 10.) So that if we can get ſome infallible evidence of our Vocation, we may ſafely from thence conclude

our

our Election from all eternity, & ſo our Salvation in the world to come! And how cheerfully may *he lay down* this *earthly tabernacle*, that knows, *when it is diſſolved, he hath a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens* (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.)

What the ſigns of effectual Calling are, will eaſily be diſcerned, if we do but conſider what effectual Calling is, and wherein it doth conſiſt. And it is nothing but this: *viz.*

A Bleſſed work of Gods Almighty power and free grace, whereby poor miſerable ſinners, whom he hath a favour for, and who, by nature lye dead in treſpaſſes and ſins among the reſt of mankind, are made, in his due time, to hear the voyce of His Word and Spirit; ſo that their eyes are opened, their hearts are

changed and renewed, and they ſo hearken to his Call, that they are (*Joh.* 6.44.) *drawn* off from their ſins and vanities, unto communion with himſelf by Faith in his Son, and give up themſelves wholly to be at his command.

Effectual Vocation therefore makes a manifeſt and a mervailous change in a man, from what he was before: He ſees theſe ſpiritual and eternal things, within the vail which were formerly hidden from his eyes, his heart love's and cloſes with thoſe objects, which formerly, as he had no ſight of, ſo he had no affections for: And there is, in a manner, as much difference between the man and himſelf, as there was betwixt *Lazarus* lying in the grave, and *Lazarus* riſing and coming forth at the call of Chriſt.

A man

A man may therefore certainly know his Effectual Vocation by five signs. *viz.*

1. The frame and temper of his heart toward sin, from which he is called off.

2. The workings of his Soul toward God, who doth so graciously call him to Himself.

3. The value and price he puts upon Christ, through whom he hopes for acceptance.

4. The esteem he hath of Gods Ordinances, the means whereby his effectual Vocation hath been wrought.

5. The respect he bears to Gods precepts, which are the Rule of Life to all that are called.

He that deals impartially in the examination of himself upon these particulars cannot be deceived.

The first sign is the frame of our

hearts toward ſin, which, if we be effectually called, will be this:

God in this bleſſed work of Vocation, calls us off from ſin unto communion with Himſelf. And therefore the perſon that is called effectually, looks upon all ſin with deteſtation, as knowing, nothing ſeparates between God and him, but that only: he is much in ſearching, and examination of himſelf, and that impartially, that he may find out whatever he hath done amiſs, ſo far as he can; compares, (for that end,) his life with Gods moſt perfect Law, yea and begs of God earneſtly, with *David*, (*Pſal.* 139. 23.) to *ſearch him, and diſcover to him, if there be any way of wickedneſs in him.* He humbles himſelf deeply before God for all the evil he finds in his heart and life. He repents unfainedly, and ſhews his repentance by a godly

a godly ſorrow, mourning chiefly becauſe he hath offended God. He labours to make what amends he can, by doing God ſo much the more ſervice in his place, for the future, and by making *Satisfaction* and *Reſtitution* where his Conſcience tells him he hath wronged or injured any perſon (*Luk.* 19. 8.) He firmly reſolves by Gods grace to look better to his ſteps, the reſidue of his days; and to fight and watch againſt all ſin, his ſpecial ſins eſpecially, as being the Bane of his Soul, and working all his woe. To that purpoſe (in ſenſe of his own weakneſs) he ſends up ardent and frequent cries to Heaven, for help and aſſiſtance, and with all importunity begs pardon through the blood of Chriſt. He is grieved to ſee God offended by others, ſpecially by thoſe whom he loves; and

improves his authority and power, where he hath any, for nothing more, than the ſuppreſſing of ſin, ſpecially in his family, and in them over whom God hath given him any charge. In a word, the perſon effectually called is troubled for nothing more then ſin, hates nothing more; there is nothing he would ſo fain be rid of, as that body of ſin, and death, he carries about with him; cryes out with the Apoſtle, (*Rom.* 7. 24.) *Wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me?* Sin is that which he beareth and groneth under as his greateſt burden, which he prayes againſt, watcheth and ſtrives againſt to his very laſt, and would count it as his greateſt happineſs to be freed from.

2. For the workings of his ſoul toward God; they are theſe, and ſuch like in one that is effectually called, *viz.* Though

Though once he had but low thoughts of God and of his love, and prized the favour of men more; and, ſo he might keep in with men, God was hardly, to any purpoſe, in his thoughts: yet now through grace, it is otherwiſe with him. He ſets an infinite price and value upon Gods favour, and fully aſſents unto the Pſalmiſt (*Pſ.* 4. 6.) *Many ſay who will ſhew* us any *good, but Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me, and that ſhall cauſe a gladneſs in my ſoul greater than any the men of this World have, when their Corn and Oyl, and all their earthly contentments do moſt increaſe.* And as he deſires and pants after nothing more then Gods love, ſo he beareth to God a love *as ſtrong as death* (*Cant.* 8. 6.) Lov's *him with all his heart and ſtrength and might,* (*Matt.* 22. 37.) Lov's him

more then wife, children, relations, more then his eſtate and wealth. He ſaith with the Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.*73.25.) *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and what is there upon Earth that I deſire beſide thee?* He pants after *Communion with God, as the Hart brayes* after *the water-brooks,* (*Pſal.*42.1.) And this love he bears to God ſhews it ſelf in his ſincere Affection and love to all Gods people, and his readineſs to do all offices of love to them, as he is able, (1 *Joh.*5.1.) *He that loveth him that begot, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him.* And *hereby do we know that we are tranſlated from death to life, if we love the brethren* (1 *Joh.*3.14.)

3. A man may know himſelf to be effectually called and ſo elected by the eſteem he hath of Jeſus Chriſt; for he puts a value upon him no leſs then infinite. And the rea-

reaſon is plain: ſuch perſons, however once they accounted not much of Chriſt (like unto others that are unregenerate,) and conceited they could have made a ſhift without him, yet now they ſee an excellency in him, that makes him in their eyes the *chiefeſt of ten thouſand*, (*Cant.* 5. 10.) and inwardly feel a need of him greater than can be expreſſed and uttered. Now with the Apoſtle, (*Phil.* 3. 8.) *they count all things but droſs and dogs-meat in compariſon of Chriſt. Their ſouls are even ſick of love unto him.* (*Cant.* 5. 8.) All their hope and Confidence is placed in him, all their Expectations are from him: They utterly renounce all their own righteouſneſs, and hope for acceptance with the Father meerly and alone upon his account. After an intereſt in his righteouſneſs they

they hunger and thirſt. They place all their happineſs *in having him* to be theirs, and in their being his, (*Cant.* 2. 16.) *My beloved is mine, and I am his*, ſaith the Church, and that was all ſhe cared for. In a word Chriſt is to the perſon effectually called, *All in All* (*Col.* 3. 11.) He is *All* to him in the enjoyment of *All*; *All* that he hath is unpleaſant to him, and wants its taſte and reliſh, if he injoy not Chriſt; He is *All* to him in the want of *All*: If he have Chriſt he wants nothing: He can find in Him All that his ſoul deſires. So great is his affection to Him.

4. A man may gather a certain evidence of his effectual Calling by the account alſo he makes of Gods ordinances. For ſuch a one values his liberty to enjoy them above his outward Accommodations. *Oh! How amiable are thy Ta-*

bernacles

bernacles, O Lord of Hosts! I had rather be a door keeper there, then to dwell in the tents of wickedness, (*Psal.*84.1.)He finds an unspeakable need that his soul hath of them. *Job* could no more live(*Job* 23.12.) *without the word of God, then his body could subsist without his daily food.* He grievs for want of them, more then for want of his chiefest accommodations: Hence is that Promise, which shews what is in the heart of a gracious person: (*Isa.* 3.20.) *Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more; but thine eyes shall see thy teachers.* Implying, that (to a gracious soul) the enjoying of God in his ordinances will make amends for the want of temporal mercies and comforts. And we read, that when

when *David* was baniſhed from *Jeruſalem*, by reaſon of *Abſolons* riſing up in rebellion againſt him, this was the thing which chiefly troubled him, and went unto his heart, that he could *not ſee* (*Pſal.* 42. 1,2,3,4.) God, and enjoy him in his Sanctuary, as he was wont to do.

5. A fifth trial of a mans effectual Calling, is the reſpect he hath to Gods commandments. For ſuch a one will deſire to know and be acquainted with all Gods Will, ſpecially that part which concern's his own duty moſt: His Query will be (*Act.* 9. 6.) *Lord what would ſt thou have me do?* He will not allow himſelf in the neglect of any thing which God requires, nor pick and chuſe among Gods precepts, thoſe which are moſt eaſie, and leaſt dangerous, and ſuit beſt with his own diſpo-

ſition

ſition, or intereſt, and ſhow his obedience only there: Indeed, that is no obedience at all; for there is no man ſo bad but doth ſome thing which God requires, and abſtains from ſome ſins which God forbid's. He is no good Servant that will do but what he liſt, of that which his Maſter commands. And though no perfection is attainable in this life, yet the ſincere Chriſtian pants and breathes after perfection; prays daily for more grace, to ſerve God better, ſets himſelf no ſtint, is humbled deeply for his daily failings, begs for pardon, and runs to Chriſt for ſtrength to do better, without *whom he knows he can do nothing*, (*Joh.* 15. 5.) And thus, by *ſhewing his ſincere reſpect to all Gods Commandments* (*Pſal.* 119. 6.) of firſt and ſecond Table both (though he can perform

none

none of them as he desires) he gets some comfortable evidence to his own soul, that he *shall never perish and be confounded.*

He that can by these signs prove his effectual calling, may safely from thence conclude his election, for so the Apostle teacheth us (2 *Pet.* 1.10.) where he bids us but make our calling sure, and we have all under one made our election sure too. And he that can do thus, may be confident upon good ground, that death, whether it come sooner, or later cannot hurt him: yea that death shall be so far from doing him any prejudice, that it shall be for his greatest advantage.

If any should think the foregoing signs serve only for those of Christs Disciples that be of the highest form: They are mistaken: for, where there is but so much

grace

grace *as a grain of muſtardſeed*, it will diſcover it ſelf by loving God above all, by putting ſuch a value upon Chriſt, as upon nothing more, by being grieved at the very heart for ſin, and hating it with a perfect deteſtation, by prizing highly thoſe Ordinances whereby God admits us (here) unto communion with himſelf; by loving all Gods people deerly, and ſhewing reſpect to all his precepts, without allowing and indulging our ſelves in any ſin. He that loves God and Chriſt either leſs than, or but as much as, ſome other thing, cannot truely be ſaid to love him at all. As he that loves his Wife, or his Child, but as he loves an Horſe, or a Dog, hath certainly neither the affection of an Husband, nor of a Father in him. The leaſt meaſure of the true love of God is to love him

him above all; the leaſt meaſure of true ſorrow for ſin is to grieve for it more then any thing elſe: The loweſt degree of true obedience, is, to have reſpect unto all Gods precepts.

When we have laboured thus to make our calling and election ſure (for both are done with one and the ſame labour) there remains nothing further incumbent upon us in order to our comfortable ſurrendring our ſouls into the hands of God, at the time of our death, but to be daily exerciſing thoſe two main graces of Faith and Repentance, till the hour of our appointed change do come. The exerciſe of them conſiſts in theſe four Particulars.

1. In ſearching our hearts and lives daily, to find out what hath been amiſs in either; for which purpoſe, we are to view our ſelvs often

often in the glaſs of Gods pure and perfect law.

2. In labouring to be more and more deeply humbled for our miſcarriages, and to work our hearts yet to a greater meaſure of godly ſorrow for them, and hatred of them.

3. In ſtirring up our ſelves to believe, and labouring to ſtrengthen our faith, by the conſideration of the freeneſs of Gods grace, and the infinite value of Chriſts Satisfaction, which is ſufficient to make an Atonement for the greateſt Sinners. To which purpoſe we muſt be meditating ever and anon upon the Covenant of Grace, wherein nothing at all is required to make us partakers of Chriſt and his Benefits, but that (*Joh.* 1. 12.) *we accept* and be willing: Chriſt ſhall for certain be ours, and, with him, we ſhall have

Heaven

Heaven and eternal happineſs, if we be willing heartily to accept him as he is offered in the Goſpel, that is, (*Act.* 5. 31.) to be *our King and Prophet*, as well *as our* Prieſt and Saviour. *He that will, let him take of the Water of Life freely.* (*Rev.* 22. 17.) We muſt conſider how many wretched and forlorn ſinners, ſome of which have come in at the *eleventh hour*, have been received to mercy; and that it is Gods way to ſhew mercy only to unworthy ones, (*Rom.* 5. 20.) that his grace may be the more magnified. We muſt remember and ponder oft, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the Wold on purpoſe to *ſeek and ſave thoſe that are loſt*, (*Luk.* 19. 10.) and that he hath promiſed, None *that come to him ſhall be rejected or* caſt off. (*Joh.* 6. 37.)

4. Laſtly in frequent and earneſt Prayer, for pardon of ſin, for the

the graces we find wanting, for the ſtrengthning of our Faith, and reſolution of all holy obedience, for help againſt the tentations of Satan (*Pſal.* 19.12.) *Lord, who can underſtand his errours, cleanſe thou me* from my ſecret faults. Pardon to me all the ſins I know by my ſelf, and all thoſe ſins which thou haſt taken notice of, that I have not obſerved. Work me to a thorow and ſaving Humiliation, ſtrengthen my weak Faith, (*Mar.* 9.24.) *help my unbeleif*, Lord! Is not the blood of Chriſt, if it were applyed to my ſoul, ſufficient to fetch out the ſtains of all my ſins? I know it is. Is not thy Mercy free? And haſt not thou bidden *me, Come without money*, (*Iſa.* 55. 1.) and incouraged all that will come, to hope for mercy? Lord, I would fain repent better, and believe better, and love thee better,

and

and obey better: But what can I do without thy grace? Oh! Let thy ſpirit help my infirmity. I do deſire to lay hold on the Scepter of thy Mercy. Oh! Deny not thy mercy to me. Kill my ſins that my ſoul may live. Tread Satan under my feet, help me againſt his fiery darts. Let me not be overcome with his tentations to diffidence, and diſtruſt. Help me to believe, and repent, and pray, and wait, and to continue knocking at the door of grace till my laſt gaſp.

In ſuch exerciſes, and meditations as theſe, ſome part of every day ſhould be ſpent. And though it ſhould ſo fall out, that we attain not to that meaſure and degree of Aſſurance, which we deſire; yet we need not be diſcouraged, but are to hold on praying and knocking, and waiting, and to throw our ſelves into the Arms

Arms of Jeſus Chriſt, bleeding inwardly for all our unkindneſſes to him, beſeeching and begging of him that he would paſs them by.

He that lives and dyes praying, and repenting, and believing, and crying for mercy through Chriſt, and doth ſo ſincerely (though haply he obtain not that comfort which God vouchſafeth to ſome others) cannot miſcarry.

Places

Places of Scripture to be often read, and meditated on.

THE 22. 31, 32. chapters of *Job.*
The 38. 39,42,49,51,62,71,73,88, 89, 90, 94, 103, 116, 119, 139, 143, 135. *Psalms.*
The 3. chap. of *Prov.*
The 12 chap. of *Ecclesiastes.*
The 38, 53, 55, 58. of *Isa.*
The 5,6,7,13,18,19,25,26,27. of *Matt.*
The 12. 13, 14, 15, 16, 19. of *Luke.*
The 7. 8. of the Epist. to the *Rom.*
The 15. of 1 *Cor.*
The 14. 15, 16, 17. of *John.*
The 5. of 2 *Cor.*
The 4. 5. of 1 *Thes.*
The 6. of 1 *Tim.*
The 2. of *Tit.*
The 11. 12. of *Heb.*
The 2. 3. of *James.*
The first Epistle of *John.*
The 2. 3, 21, 22. of *Revel.*

FINIS.

often

Job.
1,73,88,
43,135.

of *Matt.*
uke.
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